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**BULLETIN
OF THE
CENTER FOR
CHILDREN'S
BOOKS**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

- * Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 34

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Number 7

New Titles for Children and Young People

Adams, Adrienne. *The Great Valentine's Day Balloon Race*; written and illus. by Adrienne Adams. Scribner, 1980. 80-19527. ISBN 0-684-16640-2. 29p. \$9.95.

R
K-3 The dashing young rabbit of *The Easter Egg Artists*, Orson Abbott, becomes intrigued by ballooning and builds a balloon with the help of his friend Bonnie so that they can participate in the Valentine's Day balloon race. The beautifully decorated balloon wins the race because clever Bonnie notices a wind current before the other balloonists spot it. The story line is simple, but the text has a strong climax, the triple appeals of an adventurous contest, a wish granted, and the satisfaction of achievement. The illustrations are expectably delightful in composition, decorative detail, and use of clear, pure tones in the spacious and colorful illustrations.

Aesop. *Twelve Tales from Aesop*; ad. and illus. by Eric Carle. Philomel, 1980. 80-17824. Trade ed. ISBN 0-399-20753-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-399-61163-0. 29 p. Trade ed. \$9.95; Library ed. \$9.99.

Ad
K-2 Each retold fable is faced by a full-page picture that combines collage, gouache, and crayon in vivid colors, handsome in composition but rather crowded at close range. The fables are retold in adequately simplified style but often diverge from the standard version and lack the summary tag that is the hallmark of the genre. In "The Grasshopper and the Ants," for example, there is no penalty for the former's summer laziness; in "The Fox and the Crow" Carle has added a small fox whose hunger prompts his mother to trick the crow into dropping food; and in "The Wolf and the Lamb" the story is quite changed. The characters are all shown as animals in clothing in the illustrations, which—while they are most attractive pictures—makes them less forceful in depicting animal characteristics than are the animal figures of the Eve Rice adaptations of the fables, also simplified for younger children.

Afanasyev, Alexander Nikolaevich. *Russian Folk Tales*; illus. by Ivan Bilibin; tr. by Robert Chandler. Shambhala/Random House, 1980. 80-50746. Shambhala ISBN 0-87773-195-0; Random House ISBN 0-394-51353-3. 78p. \$14.95.

R
4-6 Despite an occasional awkwardness in translation, this selection of folktales from the major Russian collector is particularly delightful because of the reproduction of Bilibin's work; the paintings, framed in decorative borders, express both the romantic, florid style of turn-of-the-century art and the Slavic motifs of decorative folk art. The book includes seven classic tales; among the most familiar to English-language readers will be "Vasilisa the Beautiful" and "Ivan Tsarevich, the Grey Wolf, and the Firebird."

Barrie, James Matthew. *Peter Pan*; illus. by Trina Schart Hyman. Scribner, 1980. 80-14510. ISBN 0-684-16611-9. 184p. \$14.95.

In this new edition of a beloved classic, the minor attraction (in addition to the story of

R the boy who doesn't want to grow up) is the clear, large print and the major attraction the
4-6 illustrations. Both in the black and white line drawings and in the full-page, full-color
paintings, Hyman's elegant line and delicacy of detail are combined in effective composi-
tions that have vitality and humor.

Blumberg, Rhoda. *The First Travel Guide to the Moon; What to Pack, How to Go, and What to
See When You Get There*; illus. by Roy Doty. Four Winds, 1980. 80-66244. ISBN 0-590-
07663-9. 83p. \$7.95.

A straight-faced spoof, this covers all of the usual facets of travel literature: planning
R the trip, packing, advice about the trip itself, facts about hotels, excursions, sports, news-
4-8 papers, entertainment, etc. Brisk and imaginative, this incorporates many facts about
space flight and about the moon, and anticipates lunar tourism in blithe fashion.

Blumenthal, Shirley. *Coming to America; Immigrants from the British Isles*; by Shirley Blumenthal
and Jerome S. Ozer. Delacorte, 1980. 80-65841. ISBN 0-440-01071-3. 184p. \$9.95.

In a survey that has both depth and breadth, the authors describe the English, Irish,
R Welsh, and Scottish immigrants who came to the United States, examining the several
7-10 reasons that impelled their immigration: political persecution, a desire for religious free-
dom, or famine being the primary causes. The text discusses some of their experiences en
route and on arrival in the United States, and is given variety by the inclusion of excerpts
from letters, journals, and contemporary books. The coverage is full, including examples
of recent immigrants and of participation in public life by those of British or Irish heri-
tage. Well written and well researched, the book includes a section of notes (divided by
chapters and distinguishing between primary and secondary sources), a bibliography, a
chronological list of U.S. immigration laws, and a relative index.

Boehm, Bruce. *Connecticut Low*; by Bruce Boehm and Janet Winn. Houghton, 1980. 80-16858.
ISBN 0-395-29518-1. 113p. \$6.95.

Intimidated by his macho father, fourteen-year-old Bud finds comfort in his secret rela-
M tionship with old Mr. Coleman, who leads an isolated outdoor life along the banks of the
5-7 river. When the river rises to flood level, Bud is worried about Coleman; he is unable to
find his friend, but he is active in rescue operations, and his bravery wins unexpected
approbation from his father. Most of the story is about the flood and is based on a real
flood in the Connecticut River Valley; the book ends with Bud mourning the reported
death of the old man but hopeful about his new rapport with his father. This has plenty of
action and a dramatic situation, but the plot seems subservient to the material about the
flood; the writing style is adequate, but uneven, as is the characterization.

Brandenberg, Franz. *Leo and Emily*; illus. by Alik. Greenwillow, 1981. 80-19657. Trade ed.
ISBN 0-688-80292-3; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84292-5. 55p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library
ed. \$5.71.

In three chapters, this book for beginning independent readers incorporates humor,
R friendship values, enterprise, and some excellent familial relationships. Next door neigh-
1-2 bors, Leo and Emily are given to dawn meetings that necessitate dressing in the dark,
thereby permitting parents to sleep but producing some odd results in appearance; they
trade precious possessions for a day (Emily's grandmother's wig and Leo's family's rab-
bit) and they put on a magic show. Every adult—even wigless Grandma—is tolerant
about small lapses and appreciative about small accomplishments. Alik's people are
small, brisk, and amusing; a nice integration—both in mood and in page layout—of draw-
ings and text.

Burchard, Peter. *Digger*. Putnam, 1980. 80-15482. ISBN 0-399-20717-1. 154p. \$8.95.

Ad 6-9 Shrewd and courageous, New York newsboy Digger Pinch becomes involved in the corruption and violence of gang warfare that flourished during the heyday of Boss Tweed. Set in 1871, the story uses Digger's investigation of arson as a catalyst for his further implication in a vengeful murder and an expose of power politics, and racial discrimination. The love interest that's tossed in (Digger's growing affection for a girl he'd helped after the fire) gives the story a bit of contrast, but it's of minor importance. Although this bears a tinge of story-foisted-on-research, the story has enough action and drama to stand alone. The structure is adequate if a bit crowded, the writing style competent. The concluding author's note distinguishes among those characters and events that are historical, based on history, or fictional.

Busnar, Gene. *The Superstars of Rock: Their Lives and Their Music*. Messner, 1980. 80-18912. ISBN 0-671-32967-7. 223p. illus. with photographs. \$9.29.

Ad 8- Busnar gives biographical sketches of major groups, individual men and women singers, songwriters, and guitarists, focusing on their careers and their distinctive qualities as performers but including a fair amount of personal material. Although the writing style leans toward hyperbole, the author is candid—if not always explicit—about some of the foibles and weaknesses of his subjects. Not fine writing, but undoubtedly appealing to fans. Each section is followed by a discography; a bibliography and an index are provided.

Butterworth, William E. *Slaughter by Auto*. Four Winds, 1980. 80-66245. ISBN 0-590-07589-6. 185p. \$8.95.

Ad 7-10 Karen, eighteen, was sober; Charley was not. Angry because she wouldn't go to a motel with him, Charley pulled down the top of Karen's swimsuit and caused her to lose control of the wheel as she fended him off. They crashed. In the hospital, her leg broken, Karen learned that Charley was dead and so were the mother and two children who'd been in the other car. Faced with a manslaughter charge, Karen relied increasingly on the love, advice, and support of David, a young state trooper. The love story is adequately handled and provides good contrast to the moral and ethical question of the story: is Karen guilty of involuntary manslaughter? The pace of the story sags a bit in the middle of the book, and the characterization is variable in quality; the writing style is passably smooth, with a quickening of tempo in the detailed, convincing courtroom scenes that are the focus of the book.

Callen, Larry. *The Muskrat War*. Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1980. 80-36700. ISBN 0-316-12498-2. 132p. \$8.95.

R 5-7 Another story is, like *Pinch*, *The Deadly Mandrake*, and *Sorrow's Song*, set in the small town of Four Corners, Louisiana. It's Pinch who tells the story of Mr. Short and Mrs. Long, two artful swindlers who find the credulous folk of Four Corners easy dupes. Although the duplicity is discovered, the culprits escape—teaching Pinch and his neighbors to be less gullible. The title refers to the muskrat hides with which the swindlers escape, and to the quarrel between Pinch's father and a neighbor over territorial trapping rights. The book has the appeal of familiar characters, it has humor and an entertaining story line; like many of Callen's other books, however, it depends for comic effect on the acceptance of the fact that the denizens of Four Corners are all naive and stupid.

Calvino, Italo, comp. *Italian Folktales*; comp. and ad. by Italo Calvino; tr. by George Martin. Harcourt, 1980. 80-11879. ISBN 0-15-145770-0. 763p. \$25.00.

Although the erudite introduction, the scholarly bibliography, and the extensive section

R of appended notes indicate that the book's primary audience is the student of folklore, this
5- fine anthology should also be available to children, for it provides a rich source for the
* reader as well as for the storyteller. While some of the tales are easily identifiable variants
(for example, "Bellinda and the Monster" is a variant of "Beauty and the Beast") many
will be unfamiliar to English language readers. The stories have, among them, all the
standard folklore themes and devices, but they have also a fresh, robust, and often humor-
ous style that is engaging. To both teller and translator, bravo!

Carlson, Dale Bick. *Boys Have Feelings Too; Growing Up Male for Boys*; illus. by Carol Nicklaus.
Atheneum, 1980. 80-12895. ISBN 0-689-30770-5. 167p. \$8.95.

R Carlson points out the many ways in which society (parents, teachers, the media, peers)
6-9 pressures boys and men to conform to cultural stereotypes; she points out that although
boys still have more freedom of choice than girls, they also have less freedom to
choose behavior patterns or careers or life styles that are different. She counsels on spe-
cific subjects: relationships with girls, expressing emotion, admitting emotional needs,
choosing careers; and she is consistently candid and sensible. Carlson has the ability to
deal with a serious subject in a conversational tone, in direct prose, without being heavy-
handed; it would be simplistic to say her text boils down to "be yourself," but she
does—very deftly—show all the reasons for the conformity to the image that exists, offers
convincing evidence that such conformity brings little happiness, and suggests the ways in
which boys can indeed be themselves, selves that can be content to be imperfect or to
differ from the popular image of the macho overachiever.

Carris, Joan Davenport. *The Revolt of 10-X*. Harcourt, 1980. 80-7980. ISBN 0-15-266462-9. 128p.
\$7.95.

Ad Taylor, an eighth grader, was adjusting both to the death of her father and to a move to
5-7 a new home; because she and her father had worked together on their home computer,
Model 10-X, she spent a great deal of time alone in her room with the computer—and
that was how she found that she could control the electrical circuits of the house through
10-X. She used the computer to manipulate circuits and appliances in order to get rid of
an unwelcome visitor, domineering Aunt Cissy; she used it again to get rid of a man
who'd been invited to dinner. Eventually she confessed to her mother, and they called the
repairman (not for the first time) who told them the house had been wired for computer-
controlled circuitry. The story is a bit overburdened by the details of computer manipula-
tion; but it's adequately balanced by material about the new friends Taylor makes, her
acquisition of a pet gosling, and coming to an understanding with her mother about how
they can help each other adjust to bereavement rather than each keeping her grief locked
away.

Cazet, Denys. *The Duck with Squeaky Feet*; written and illus. by Denys Cazet. Bradbury, 1980.
80-18018. ISBN 0-87888-171-9. 27p. \$7.95.

M Actually it's the duck's shoes that squeak, as seen in the crowded, overly-detailed
4-6 black and white drawings that reflect the cumulation of the text. This is a nonsense tale in
yrs. which animals are added to the duck, at first on stage alone. The capricious device is that
"Once upon a time there was a duck with squeaky feet. And a toothless crocodile? There
isn't any crocodile in this story. But . . . he's already here. So, let's put him in the
story." Thus, on a might-as-well-include basis, are added a baseball-fan pig, a laughing
hyena, a grouchy bear, etc. On the stage apron, below the text, the animals are shown
milling about, planning their act, commenting in balloon captions. In the end, each is
happy because another member of the cast has been helpful or amusing or loving. All
take off save for the duck, who oils her shoes, again doing a solo turn. Cartoon humor,
slapstick rather than clever, with limited nonsense appeal.

Cherry, Mike. *Steel Beams & Iron Men*. Four Winds, 1980. 80-66246. ISBN 0-590-07591-8. 87p. illus. with photographs. \$9.95.

R 6-12 A former schoolteacher seeking more exciting work, Cherry became an ironworker after finding a mill job boring (The mill work was driving me bananas with its monotony . . .”) and feels that construction work is just “hazardous enough to keep the adrenalin flowing.” His descriptions of the many kinds of work that ironworkers do is enlivened by anecdotes; the writing style is colorful, conversational, rough, and vivid. The photographs are not always informative, but they are always dramatic.

Clifford, Eth. *The Killer Swan*. Houghton, 1980. 80-17773. ISBN 0-395-29742-7. 114p. \$6.95.

Ad 5-7 Lex is fourteen, adjusting with difficulty to his father’s death, his new stepfather, and the move from city to country. He has made only one friend, Caleb, and through him has become interested in archery. While his mother and stepfather admire the nesting swans in the lake next to their home, Lex is angered by the hostile behavior of the cob, and furious when it attacks its young; when the swan kills Caleb’s dog, Lex kills it with an arrow. His stepfather’s sympathetic behavior brings a new rapport. The writing style and characterization are sensitively honed, giving, especially, a strong picture of a lonely, unhappy adolescent. The pace of the book is slowed by interpolated sections (the book begins and closes with these) about the swans and these are almost poetic, explaining events from the swans’ point of view, and making it clear that the cob’s murderous behavior is due to the pain he’s suffering because of an injured eye.

Cohen, Daniel. *Science Fiction’s Greatest Monsters*; illus. with photographs and prints. Dodd, 1980. 80-1017. ISBN 0-396-07859-1. 122p. \$5.95.

M 5-7 Designed as a low vocabulary/high interest book, this survey of monsters focuses on those of television and film, although there are brief references to monsters in books, magazines, and radio dramatizations. The subject has great popular interest, but this broad treatment by Cohen gives little attention to any individual piece of entertainment, and so seems crowded with a long list of names and titles. The movie stills will appeal to science fiction buffs, no doubt, and the book does, to a limited extent, categorize types of monsters: beast-like creatures, androids, robots, plants, etc. The writing style is simple, with short sentences; the print is large but rather solid on those pages not broken up by illustrations; occasionally the text seems over-simplified, as when the author says, in the same paragraph in which he has used the names of Orson Welles and H. G. Wells, “The names are not spelled the same, H. G. used only one “e” in his last name.”

Collins, Jean E. *She Was There; Stories of Pioneering Women Journalists*; illus. with photographs. Messner, 1980. 80-36769. ISBN 0-671-33082-9. 191p. \$8.79.

R 7-10 Although the emphasis is on professional experiences in this collective biography of women journalists, there is some personal material; the book is based on interviews, with an editorial note about the subject preceding each first-person account. The book has variety, drama, the multiple appeals of the worlds of the press, theater, public life, military adventure, and the success stories of fifteen women who have found gratification in exciting careers, many of them overcoming prejudice in reaching their goals.

Colman, Hila. *What’s the Matter with the Dobsons?* Crown, 1980. 80-18980. ISBN 0-517-53409-6. 113p. \$7.95.

Ad 6-8 What’s wrong with the Dobsons is that they quarrel; Lisa is Daddy’s pet, her older sister Amanda is bitterly convinced, while Lisa is equally jealous of the close relationship between her sister and her mother. Arguments about favoritism between Mom and Dad become so intense that they separate, and Lisa goes to live with Dad in his hotel. Each,

in his or her own way, feels a void and tries to be more understanding, and the book ends with a reunion and an effort to improve the emotional climate. Intensively analytical, this is convincing in its description of characters, relationships, and stresses; the viewpoint shifts to make the attitudes and reactions of the two girls more vivid, a device successful in its purpose but not contributing to the cohesion of the narrative. Not a great deal happens in the sense of broad action, but what happens within and between members of the Dobson family is perceptively depicted.

Corrin, Sara, comp. *A Time to Laugh; Thirty Stories for Young Children*; comp. by Sara and Stephen Corrin; illus. by Gerald Rose. Faber, 1980. ISBN 0-571-09950-5. 205p. \$6.95.

R
3-5 First published in England, a book that can be used for reading aloud to younger children as well as for independent reading by children in the middle grades is illustrated with comic-grotesque line drawings. While most of the material is easily available elsewhere, the short stories and excerpts from books are durable stuff with time-tested appeal: an assortment of folktales from varied sources, appearances by familiar characters like Pooh, Mrs. Pepperpot, or Brer Rabbit, and stories by such popular authors as Edith Nesbit, Eleanor Farjeon, and Ruth Ainsworth. The introduction discusses the types of humor that appeal to children, and the stories in this anthology reflect the diversity of readers' opinions about what is funny.

Cross, Helen Reeder. *The Real Tom Thumb*; illus. by Stephen Gammell. Four Winds, 1980. 80-11447. ISBN 0-590-07606-X. 92p. \$8.95.

R
4-6 A biography of Charles Stratton, the midget who was given the stage name of "Tom Thumb" by his mentor and friend, Phineas Barnum. While this is just a bit on the gushy side, it is a carefully researched book, revealing the fact that the midget was actually not quite five when he began his public appearances (Barnum's publicity announced that Tom Thumb was eleven) and did not make public announcement of his real age until he was nineteen. The biography includes information about Tom Thumb's romance and marriage, his wealth, his generosity and charm, and his loyalty to Barnum, but it focuses primarily on his career and on such highlights as his command audience with Queen Victoria. Some of the interest in the book may rest on the fact that Tom Thumb was both a curiosity and a legend in his time; some of the appeal is in the glamor of show business.

Dickinson, Peter. *Hepzibah*; illus. by Sue Porter. Godine, 1980. 80-65425. ISBN 0-87923-334-6. 29p. \$8.95.

M
3-4 Close-set type and technically proficient but confusingly cluttered pictures are secondary drawbacks to a nonsensical story that has some humor but is weakened by a slapdash plot that is extended and contrived. Hepzibah is tubby, malevolent, and eccentric; the King had even held a contest to choose the right word for her, but nobody had been able to think of a name awful enough. She persecutes the King of Corumba and his butler Francis Francis, wheedles a helicopter out of the King, locks him in a bathroom after inviting him for breakfast, and his breakfast is a bathtub of milk in which a cow is standing and which has cornflakes tossed in. And so on, and on, and on. Occasionally there are a few lines in small print at the foot of a page; an example is, "The workman in the middle of the picture is Mr. Terry Dale. He is quite a good workman, honest and strong, but unluckily he is rather easily hypnotized, which slows him down." Like many other bits of the book, this has nothing to do with the action. This is based on stories told by the author to his children, and it has indeed the quality of ad lib invention with which such stories are often told; it lacks completely the cohesion, the structure, and the sense of story that have distinguished Dickinson's books for older children.

Dorman, N.B. *Laughter in the Background*. Elsevier/Nelson, 1980. 80-23941. ISBN 0-525-66714-8. 158p. \$8.95.

M
6-8 Marcie turns twelve during the course of this somber story, and it brings no changes. Living alone with her divorced, alcoholic mother who becomes abusive and brings men home when she's been drinking, Marcie has become a frightened loner who eats for solace. For a time, her mother receives guidance and seems to be well, but when she goes back to drinking, things are even worse; after one of the men her mother's brought home crawls into Marcie's bed, she is frightened enough to ask for help. Placed in a foster home, Marcie finds affection and security; she even has enough courage to say no to her mother's drunken pathos about being alone. This is a believable case study, but it's a dull and repetitive book, written in pedestrian style, slow of pace, and shallow in characterization.

Elmore, Patricia. *Susannah and the Blue House Mystery*; illus. by John C. Wallner. Dutton, 1980. 79-20491. ISBN 0-525-40525-9. 164p. \$9.95.

Ad
4-6 Lucy, who tells the story, and Susannah join forces to solve a mystery. Where has the grandfather of another classmate, Juliet, gone? His once-grand mansion, The Blue House, is empty, its treasures long gone. It is discovered that the old man has died on a bus, and a mourning Juliet confesses that she had thought he meant to leave her something; diligently as Susannah and Ivy search the house (willed to a niece) they can find nothing, but they are sure there is something in the house, because there's evidence that someone else is also searching. They persevere. It will surprise few readers (and will satisfy most of them) when the indefatigable Susannah ferrets out the secret, exposing the culprit (an avaricious antique dealer) and bringing Juliet her inheritance. Lucy's white, Susannah is black, and their achievements as detectives are within the bounds of credibility although there's a tinge of Nancy Drewish omniscience. The writing style is not outstanding, but it's adequate, and the story has some suspense, lots of action, and a moderately sturdy structure.

Ewing, Kathryn. *Things Won't be the Same*. Harcourt, 1980. 80-7982. ISBN 0-15-285663-3. 92p. \$6.95.

R
4-5 In a sequel to *A Private Matter* (reviewed in the September, 1975 issue) ten-year-old Marcy feels equally apprehensive about her mother's imminent remarriage and about a visit to her father while Mom is on her honeymoon. She hardly remembers her father, she doesn't know his wife Ginny, and she finds it strange that her father is so at ease with Ginny's child by her first marriage. The visit is unexpectedly successful, and Marcy admires Ginny enough to evoke some irritation in her mother, when she tells Mom about it. Then there's a visit from her new stepfather's daughter—and Marcy's misery is complete. She's resentful and jealous, she writes her Dad asking if she may live with him. This so upsets her mother that there's a heart-to-heart showdown in which Marcy acknowledges that she must accept change. There isn't much action or story line, but this is a competently written story that sympathetically and realistically explores the divided and wavering loyalties, the ambivalence and resentment, and the triumphant common sense and adaptability displayed by many children in a fractured family situation. Smoothly written, wholly convincing.

Fassi, Carlo. *Figure Skating with Carlo Fassi*; by Carlo Fassi with Gregory Smith; illus. by Walt Spitzmiller. Scribner, 1980. 80-18013. ISBN 0-684-16314-4. 180p. \$17.95.

Ad
6- Although the descriptions of skating figures, free and compulsory, may interest neophytes or even non-skating fans of the increasingly popular art of figure skating, this is primarily a book for the serious skater; written by a man who has coached many Olympic

winners, it is designed for both the beginner and the more advanced skater, as Fassi states in his preface, and this means, unfortunately, that some portions of the book are inappropriate for each group. Fassi gives advice on purchase and care of equipment, on proper clothing, diet, and practice, and—by far the major portion of the book—on how to execute movements, simple or complex. Certainly the most valuable part of the book, this includes notes on the most frequent errors that occur in learning each movement. The illustrations are diagrams and, although they are drawn with skill and show progressive changes in pattern within each movement, they do not always make such changes sufficiently clear, as might a slow-motion film. There is no index; the glossary is adequate, but it does not include all terms used in the book: “camel” is omitted, for example, as is “sit spin.”

Fisher, Timothy Wilcox. *Hammocks, Hassocks and Hideaways; Furniture Kids Can Build for Themselves*; illus. by Kathleen Kolb. Addison-Wesley, 1980. 79-24812. Library ed. ISBN 0-201-02936-7; Paper ed. ISBN 0-201-02938-3. 115p. Library ed. \$7.95; Paper ed. \$4.95.

M 5- Line drawings illustrate, but do not include every step of, a series of projects, most of which require the use of only hand tools and a sewing machine. The materials tend to be inexpensive, although some of the projects require not-inexpensive lumber or items obtainable at a hardware store. The instructions are usually clear, although at times not specific: “Hang the furniture from the 2x6” is not explicit, nor is “Study the old lampshade . . . attach your papier-mâché shade in the same manner.” The projects are grouped under the headings of “Tools and Materials,” “On-the-floor Furniture,” “In-the-air Furniture,” “Outdoor Furniture,” “Storage,” “New Spaces,” and “Lamps and Accessories,” and range from simple tasks like putting colored tissue in windows to making a raised platform bed that includes a bookcase.

Fritz, Jean. *The Man Who Loved Books*; illus. by Trina Schart Hyman. Putnam, 1981. 80-12614. ISBN 0-399-20715-5. 43p. \$8.95.

Ad 3-5 Brown, black, and white, Hyman’s sturdy and beautifully detailed drawings are framed in a series of pictures (usually two per page) that are balanced by a text printed within similar frames; intricately designed borders set off the latter. The text is based on a legend, but has some historical merit; Columba was known to have been born in Ireland in 521 and emigrated to Scotland as a missionary, converting the Picts to Christianity. Fritz simplifies this by writing, “He . . . persuaded the king himself to become a Christian.” Later sanctified, Columba is supposed to have left Ireland, in this version, out of repentance for having caused a battle in which thousands of men were killed. The focus of the account is on Columba as a book-lover, so avid for reading matter that he illegally copied a manuscript and was denied its possession by the high king. “One of the most human and lovable of the saints,” the jacket copy states, but this may be limited in appeal and may exclude readers who place no credence in sainthood. The style is smooth enough, and the handsome pictures add humor, but the subject may not evoke broad reader interest.

Garner, Alan. *Fairytales of Gold*; illus. by Michael Foreman. Philomel, 1980. 80-15240. ISBN 0-399-20759-7. 200p. \$15.95.

Ad 3-5 First published in England, Garner’s four tales in the fairytale tradition are “The Golden Brothers,” “The Girl of the Golden Gate,” “The Three Golden Heads of the Well,” and “The Princess and the Golden Mane.” The stories are very simply told and incorporate many familiar facets of the folktale tradition: kindness rewarded, the impossible quest, rhymed refrains, magical objects. Foreman’s paintings, alone or as a background for print, are on every page; they are effective in composition and in the subtle nuances

of color but less effective in the depiction of faces, the latter drawn almost in cartoon style. The stories approximate many true fairytales; that is, they combine themes, motifs, devices, and partial plots, even almost-recognizable characters, usually fusing several in a single story. They have plenty of action but are less impressive in structure and development.

Giblin, James. *The Scarecrow Book*; by James Giblin and Dale Ferguson. Crown, 1980. 80-13800. ISBN 0-517-53862-8. 55p. illus. with photographs. \$8.95.

R
3-5 Broad margins and large, well-spaced type contribute to the spacious, attractive format of a book that is plentifully illustrated by photographs and reproductions of prints showing scarecrows. The text gives ample historical coverage as well as describing the various kinds of scarecrows that are in use today, and it carefully distinguishes among fact, conjecture, and legend or superstition. Written in a direct, straightforward style and based on solid research, this makes it clear that there have been—and are—all sorts of devices (including human beings to scare crows away) in addition to the most familiar scarecrow, the effigy. Instructions for making a scarecrow, a bibliography, and an index are appended.

Gilson, Jamie. *Do Bananas Chew Gum?* Lothrop, 1980. 80-11414. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-41960-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-51960-1. 158p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67.

Ad
4-6 Sam Mott, in sixth grade, ruefully accepts the fact that he's the butt of classmates' jokes: he reads at second-grade level ("Dumbhead Sam") and he wears braces ("Tinsel Teeth"). Sam, who tells the story, discovers that his inability to read causes problems when he's babysitting; he tries to cover his embarrassment with clowning, as he does at school. He worries about what kind of job he'll be able to get as an adult; he is edgily defiant when help is suggested—but he does agree to try, is tested by a special teacher, and discovers he has a learning disability (the title question is one of those used in the testing) and that there are ways to improve his reading. While it's hard to believe that neither teachers nor Sam's parents had done something about Sam's problem earlier, the book does make clear how painful the situation is and also informs readers that a person with a learning disability is not necessarily stupid. The writing is breezy and humorous, the characterization sturdy and the relationships convincing.

Girion, Barbara. *Like Everybody Else*. Scribner, 1980. 80-21850. ISBN 0-684-16715-8. 169p. \$8.95.

Ad
5-7 Twelve-year-old Samantha, who tells the story, is proud of her mother, a writer of children's books who has just had her first adult book published, despite the fact that her mother's career has precluded the provision of cookies and participation in PTA that's been enviable in the mothers of Sam's friends. Sam reads her mother's new book and is shocked by its explicit sexuality; she's embarrassed by the comments of peers and family friends. There are irate telephone calls. At first uneasy and unhappy, Sam begins to feel her mother is being unduly criticized; she thinks it over, and when it's time for her to prepare her Bat Mitzvah speech, she delights her mother by defending a woman's right to be the sort of person she wants to be and to choose both her career and her way of implementing it. It's an interesting situation, and the development is believable, but the book is weakened by the heavy emphasis on the reaction of Sam and others to the new novel, an emphasis that suggests that the story is less important than the author's viewpoint on the freedom to write and on censorship.

Goble, Paul. *The Gift of the Sacred Dog*; written and illus. by Paul Goble. Bradbury, 1980. 80-15843. ISBN 0-87888-165-4. 27p. \$8.95.

Goble's handsome paintings, vigorous in composition and often delicate in style, often

Ad 3-4 stylized, always reflect his identification with the Native American way of life and his empathy with their respect for natural things. Here he uses fiction to dramatize the importance of the horse in the Indian culture; although a prefatory note states that the horse was brought to this continent by the Spanish, it is a herd of wild horses that comes to the boy protagonist who has gone alone into the hills to ask the Great Spirit to help his hungry people. Like other Goble books, this is handsome, with good page layout and good integration of print and picture. The writing style is a bit stiff, the book's focus being on how the horse improved the Indian way of life and the ability to hunt—especially to hunt buffalo. The text, which can be read aloud to younger children, ends with Sioux songs about horses and buffalo, capping a tale of the wild horses who came after the boy's vigil, delighting those who acquired and tamed them.

Greenfield, Eloise. *Darlene*; illus. by George Ford. Methuen. 1980. 80-15922. ISBN 0-416-30701-9. 26p. \$7.95.

Ad K-2 Soft brown and white drawings show that Darlene is in a wheelchair, a fact not mentioned in the text; Darlene and her family are pictured as black, beautiful, and well-to-do. This has little story line, and may have been written primarily to show a black child who is handicapped—a worthy purpose, but it doesn't make a story. Darlene is at her uncle's home, anxious to have her mother arrive to pick her up; she plays reluctantly at first with her cousin Joanne (a bit older and very patient) and becomes so stimulated that she doesn't want to leave when her mother does show up. So, in a flat ending, “. . . they all sat down and sang songs, and the one that sang loudest was Darlene.”

Guest, Elissa Haden. *The Handsome Man*. Four Winds, 1980. 80-66247. ISBN 0-590-07661-2. 184p. \$7.95.

R 6-9 Told by fourteen-year-old Alexandra in present tense, the story is set in Greenwich Village, where Alex and her supportive friend Angie become preoccupied with learning the identity of the handsome man Alex has seen several times and by whom she's smitten. After assiduous trailing, the girls sit next to him in a restaurant and strike up a conversation; in a later encounter, they learn he's a photographer; eventually he asks Alex to pose for him. It's an innocent, touching, bittersweet experience for Alex, who's also upset because there's a breach in the relationship between her parents. The story ends with Alex reluctantly telling the man, Terry, that she's going to the Cape for the summer, and there's one chaste kiss. This is an impressive first novel, perceptive in describing the nuances of family life, written in a smooth style that has vitality and structure, sympathetic in its depiction of the aching yearning of a first and unrequited love.

Hamilton, Virginia. *The Gathering*. Greenwillow, 1981. 80-12512. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80269-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84269-0. 192p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.59.

R 7-10 In the last book of a science fiction trilogy (*Justice and Her Brothers*, *Dustland*) the four time travellers whose parapsychological powers have carried them into the strangeness of another culture unite to fight their final battle, combining their psychic force to defeat the dark Mal. Rescuing others, they have come to the domed land from which power emanates and learn that Dustland is the future of their own time; they return home to family love and security but know that they still have power, that their knowledge of the future is not in vain. This volume, as beautifully written and as intricate as its predecessor, is a bit slow in starting; for those who have not read *Dustland* the proliferation of strange creatures, strange names, and odd speech patterns may be cumbersome at first. The story gathers momentum, however, and comes to a sharp focus and strong action. What is perhaps most impressive about Hamilton's writing is her superb ability to fuse the mystical and the dramatic; like a skilled musician, she is in control of both the music and the instrument.

Hayward, Linda. *The Sesame Street Dictionary*; illus. by Joe Mathieu. Random House, 1980. 80-11644. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-84007-0; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-94007-5. 253p. Trade ed. \$9.95; Library ed. \$9.99.

NR
5-6
yrs. Cartoon style drawings in color profusely illustrate each entry, and the use of traditional cartoon devices like the caption in a balloon or the use of "CRASH!" surrounded by jagged streaks further crowds already crowded pages. Although recommended by the publisher as suitable for ages three to eight, this seems too difficult for the three-year-old and not appropriate for the eight-year-old because of its several weaknesses. It seldom gives variant forms of a word (although these are inconsistently provided) and often ignores an alternate meaning; it often gives inexact definitions ("The date is the day, month, and year when something happens.") or erroneously partial ones ("When you touch something, you feel it with your hand or another part of your body," ignores the fact that other people or objects can touch.) There is no pronunciation guide. This may give young children the concept of alphabetization but it is inadequate for reference use, having a modicum of browsing use; children in third and fourth grade can find dictionaries that are better organized, better illustrated, and more informative.

Hutchins, Pat. *The Tale of Thomas Mead*; written and illus. by Pat Hutchins. Greenwillow, 1980. 79-6398. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80282-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84282-8. 31p. (Read-alone Books) Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$5.71.

R
1-2 Hutchins's humorous and colorful drawings add to the fun of a rhyming, mock-didactic text for beginning independent readers. The poetic refrain provides repetition, the vocabulary is simple but not stultified, and the rhyme and scansion are tidy. This is a tallish tale, and a funny one, as Thomas, who adamantly refuses to learn to read, has a series of disasters that culminate in his causing a multi-vehicle pile-up. (He couldn't read the "Don't Cross" sign). Jailed for jaywalking, Thomas receives a parental edict: he stays there until he learns to read. He's taught by two hulking cellmates, and learns rather easily; now he reads all the time. But his answer, when told to put his book away, is the same one he had given when he was coaxed to learn to read: "Why should I?"

Kelley, Leo P. *Good-bye to Earth*. Childrens Press, 1980. 78-68226. ISBN 0-516-02252-0. 60p. illus. \$5.95.

NR
6-8 After three years at Space School, Ellen Drake fears she will not pass the test and become an astronaut, and she remembers that John, the man she loved, had said he wanted a wife who would stay on Earth with him. In the test station, Ellen and her fellow student Steve encounter a hostile world: plants that try to get the human's air supply, fish that breathe fire, a bribe to drop the program. Ellen also meets John who begs her to come back to him. Turns out both briber and John are robots, parts of the test, which both Steve and Ellen pass. They are immediately given command of a ship (with passengers in deep-sleep cubicles destined to start a new colony) and have an eventful voyage during which Ellen saves Steve's life while he is trying to help salvage another ship. This is meretricious fiction: wooden characters, a contrived plot, and pedestrian writing style.

Lawson, Annetta. *The Lucky Yak*; illus. by Allen Say. Parnassus/Houghton, 1980. 80-15083. ISBN 0-395-29523-8. 30p. \$6.95.

R
K-3 Meticulous use of stippling, hatching, and parallel lines gives marvelous variety to Say's black and white drawings, clean in line and beautifully, often comically, detailed. Lawson uses the device that is so familiar in folk literature: if you're not content with your lot, try something else (*There's Always Room for One More, Meshka the Kvetch*) and you'll be grateful to go back to what you had. Here it's Edward Yak, who had emigrated with his parents from Tibet when he was very young, received a good education,

made a great deal of money as a businessman, and had retired to early boredom. On consulting a psychologist, Edward is told he can take care of the doctor's little girl Muffin for a few days while the doctor goes away to think. An atrocious brat, Muffin soon wears poor Edward to a frazzle, and he is absolutely delighted to go back to the peace and quiet of the existence he had earlier found boring. There's humor and flavor in the writing style, and a nicely matched mood in the illustrations.

Madler, Trudy. *Why Did Grandma Die?* illus. by Gwen Connelly. Raintree, 1980. 79-23892. ISBN 0-8172-1354-6. 31p. \$8.95.

Ad
2-4 When the grandmother who lives with her family dies, Heidi asks why and is told that when people get old their heart wears out, that's what happened to Grandma. At first Heidi is rude to the neighbor who is going to take Grandma's place in taking care of Heidi after school and of her small brother, but after a talk with her father about the inevitability of death and the sustaining continuity of loving memories, she accepts the change. Although this is a slight treatment, it is adequate; Heidi gets supportive counsel from both parents and she adjusts to her loss. The book is simply written, occasionally (calling an ambulance a white truck) perhaps oversimply, and Heidi's adjustment might lead readers to think that a day or two is enough for such adjustment to take place. The illustrations, with background details that are reminiscent of the work of Charles Keeping, are attractive in color and composition and include a rarity in children's books, a picture of Grandma in her coffin.

Marshall, Edward. *Space Case*; illus. by James Marshall. Dial, 1980. 80-13369. Trade ed. ISBN 0-8037-8005-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-8007-9. 38p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$7.45.

Ad
K-3 A close encounter of the elementary kind occurs when a dome-shaped UFO lands on earth on Hallowe'en, is thought to be in costume, and goes trick-or-treating with several children. It spends the night with one of them, accompanies him to school (and gets him a good grade for his science project) and takes off upon learning that Hallowe'en comes only once a year. It promises to come back at Christmas time and takes off in a flash. The story ends with the thing's young host saying "Wow." The combination of a favorite holiday and an outer space visitor will no doubt appeal to the read-aloud audience, but they may find the ending a bit flat and inconclusive. The story is adequately told and has humor (as do the bright, simply drawn and colored illustrations) but even within the parameters of a fantasy, it isn't quite believable that most of the characters, children or adults, express little interest or curiosity—let alone disbelief—at the appearance of a yellow dome with antennae that walks, talks, and does mathematical calculations at the blackboard when it visits school.

Marzollo, Jean. *Amy Goes Fishing*; illus. by Ann Schweninger. Dial, 1980. 80-11598. Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-019-8; Paper ed. ISBN 0-8037-0011-X. 56p. Library ed. \$5.89; Paper ed. \$2.25.

R
1-2 Small, neatly framed pictures in cool colors illustrate a pleasant story for beginning independent readers, low-keyed but satisfying. On a Saturday when the other members of the family are busy, Amy and her father go fishing. At first Amy finds it as boring as her older siblings have said, but the companionship with her father, the delicious lunch, and the triumph of her first catch change her opinion. Fishing isn't boring at all, she concludes. "Never said it was," her father replies, as the story ends. Large, well-spaced print and a simple albeit not circumscribed vocabulary facilitate reading ease, and the story has the double appeals of success at a new skill and the amicable father-daughter relationship.

Meyer, Carolyn. *Rock Band; Big Men in a Great Big Town*. Atheneum, 1980. 80-13349. ISBN 0-689-50181-1. 158p. \$8.95.

Ad 8-10 For those young adult readers who are rock fans or aspiring performers, this is a down-to-earth saga of what it's really like to try and fail. Mark, Rob, and Steven form a combo as young adolescents; they are diligent in rehearsal, try to cultivate a distinctive style, seek anxiously for chances to perform. There are some changes in personnel, a disappointing audition at a club, an effort at making it in Manhattan, and finally a realization that they aren't going to make it; after a final party, the group breaks up and each goes his own way. The story has vivid and convincing details, and the writing style is competent, but the author's diligent research results in a book that at times seems more a case history than a narrative, especially when the text is interrupted by a section headed "Notes" (as it is intermittently) that give background information about the job of a manager, for example, or what happens if a record company talent scout offers a contract.

Milton, Hilary H. *The Brats and Mr. Jack*. Beaufort, 1980. 80-23144. ISBN 0-8253-0004-5. 220p. \$8.95.

NR 4-6 Meg and her brother Yancy are thirteen and twelve; they have again run away from the county home; orphans, they fear separation. They arrive in a city where they feel they won't be found and meet Mr. Jack, who tells them of an empty house where they can hide. Elderly Mr. Jack lives in a cave and seems to be a derelict—except that the story is replete with hints that he is a wealthy man who prefers anonymity and solitude. He's much impressed by Meg and Yancy, particularly by their independence, and helps them in one of their not-infrequent brushes with suspicious people. When they are finally brought into court, a mysterious wealthy man (Mr. Jack) arranges for the children to live in the house in which they've been squatters, even hiring a couple as caretakers, and assumes all expenses. The children never learn that old, shabby Mr. Jack is their benefactor. It's all highly improbable and heavily based on coincidence, and there is no recognition by Mr. Jack or the author of the possible culpability of two children who repeatedly cheat, play truant, lie, and steal.

Myers, Bernice. *Not At Home?* written and illus. by Bernice Myers. Lothrop, 1981. 80-16288. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-41974-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-51974-1. 48p. Trade ed. \$6.95; Library ed. \$6.67.

Ad 2-3 Scrabbly, comic drawings with casual color registration illustrate a first-person story of estrangement and reconciliation. Sally is happy and excited about spending the weekend at her best friend's house, but when she gets there a stranger answers the door and says Lorraine isn't home. Disappointed and angry, Sally doesn't speak to Lorraine all week. Lorraine doesn't call, makes no overtures when Sally acts aloof in school. At the end of the week, there's a confrontation; Sally discovers Lorraine had been out of the house for only a few moments, that the stranger (a babysitter for Lorraine's baby brother) hadn't reported turning Sally away. A no-fault event, and the ex-best friends immediately become best friends, Sally agreeing to spending the upcoming weekend with Lorraine. Slight in structure but true to life, an agreeably light handling of the sometimes deep and mercurial nature of children's friendships.

Panek, Dennis. *Matilda Hippo Has a Big Mouth*; written and illus. by Dennis Panek. Bradbury, 1980. 80-13260. ISBN 0-87888-161-1. 29p. \$7.95.

Ad K-2 There's no grace in Panek's bold, bright, uncluttered pictures, but they have action and humor and are well enough integrated with the text to help tell the story. There is very little text; Matilda skates by various other animals and has an unkind remark for each, even bawling out "Why didn't someone tell me about that puddle?" after she has slipped

and fallen. Then she finds "Matilda Hippo has a big mouth" written on a board fence; she cries, the other animals say they're sorry if she is. Matilda crosses out the "has" and substitutes "had" as she smilingly says "I'm sorry too." Mildly amusing, mildly pedantic, nicely simple.

Paulsen, Gary. *The Spitball Gang*. Elsevier/Nelson, 1980. 80-36729. ISBN 0-525-66695-8. 125p. \$7.95.

NR
7-9 Greg and Stu, detectives with the Denver police department, are baffled by the bank robbery they're assigned to investigate, since all witnesses agree that the job was done by a gang of young children. It turns out that the coach of a boys' baseball team is responsible; "I was getting sick of candy asses and I decided to turn them into men." There's turmoil in the police station when the boys and their parents are assembled; further investigation reveals that an older boy (Peter is twelve and crippled) had used behavior modification techniques to push the coach into the crime as compensation for his own frustration at being physically inactive. The plot is overextended, the characterization superficial, and the writing style staccato and slangy.

Posner, Grace. *In My Sister's Eyes*. Beaufort, 1980. 80-20781. ISBN 0-8253-0013-4. 144p. \$7.95.

M
7-9 A shy high school senior, Billy is surprised when popular, pretty Chris, a cheerleader, seems to like him; at first he had thought, when Chris asked him to coach her in tennis, that she was interested because he was on the tennis team, but their friendship solidified. Chris even took it in stride when Billy told her about his sister Jenny, a twenty-year-old retarded victim of epilepsy who lived at a school but was often home for visits. There are a few subplots (Billy's friend Frank can't get a girl; Chrissie's friend Beth rails because Chris gives up cheerleading and then confesses she's hostile because she's afraid she's pregnant) but no strong story line; the situation is adequately developed and the book includes many concerns of adolescents, however. There is no depth of characterization, but the characters are credible. The writing style is adequate.

Pringle, Laurence P. *Lives at Stake; The Science and Politics of Environmental Health*. Macmillan, 1980. 80-14272. ISBN 0-02-775410-3. 154p. illus. with photographs. \$8.95.

R
7- In another thoughtful and thought-provoking book in his "Science for Survival" series, Pringle examines the known and suspected dangers in food, products, pollutants, job-related health hazards, and drugs that are a detrimental part of the total human environment. He describes testing materials, controls, controversy and testimony, and discusses the roles and responsibilities of citizens, governmental agencies, and industry. A well-written and well-organized text concludes with a list of some national groups working in the public interest, a glossary of terms, an extensive bibliography, and an index.

St. George, Judith. *Haunted*. Putnam, 1980. 80-16703. ISBN 0-399-20736-8. 158p. \$7.95.

M
7-9 Alex got to Red Roof Farm first; sixteen, he was nervous about taking care of a house in which there had been a murder, and he was relieved when Bruce, three years older, arrived to share their summer job as caretakers. There was something eerie about the house, and strange things happened; it seemed evident that somebody or something else was in the house. It all has to do with a hidden second will, the bequest of the owner's wife, a Nazi who late in life discovered that her real mother had been in a concentration camp. The investigations, suspicions, and discoveries about the owners is accompanied by the story of a budding romance between Alex and a pleasant, friendly summer visitor to the nearby Pennsylvania town. The writing style is adequate if not polished, the characterization similarly competent but not distinctive; the plot is not convincing nor is it smoothly developed.

Schulz, Charles M. *Bon Voyage, Charlie Brown (And Don't Come Back!!)* written and illus. by Charles M. Schulz. Random House, 1980. 79-92273. ISBN 0-394-84415-7. 105p. \$7.95 paper.

M
K-2 Charlie and Linus, with Snoopy, Marcie, and Peppermint Patty, are chosen as exchange students for a two-week trip to France. Traveling via London, they arrive in the French countryside and are confronted by a mysterious situation: two of them can't get into the chateau where they are supposed to be lodged. The niece of the owner befriends them and is amply repaid when they get help that halts a fire in the chateau. Then they go home. This is based on an animated film, and it doesn't translate well, even to the comic book format of the story. There are abrupt shifts from one episode to another, slapstick contrivance, occasional interpolation of pages of pictures that have nothing to do with the story. This may appeal to Charlie Brown fans because of the familiarity of the characters, and it may appeal because of the concept or action, but it's awkwardly put together, badly written, and overextended.

Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. *The Day I Was Born*; by Marjorie and Mitchell Sharmat; illus. by Diane Dawson. Dutton, 1980. 80-16313. ISBN 0-525-28560-1. 25p. \$7.95.

Ad
K-2 The scene is Alexander's sixth birthday party, the text an antiphonal chorus. Alexander brags and exaggerates, and his older brother gives his versions of the same events: it wasn't the President of the United States who telephoned, it was Grandma; there wasn't a parade to the hospital when Alexander was born, it was three garbage trucks that were held up by a stalled car. In the end—and it comes too unexpectedly to be convincing—Alexander's big brother, after all the belittling, says, "In the last six years, I got to like my turtle a lot. But I like Alexander even better." The illustrations are all double-page spreads with the two brothers at opposite ends of the festive table. They are pictured at the foot of the pages, the alternative versions of what happened six years earlier are pictured above in nicely textured pencil drawings of rather scruffy-looking characters; literal children may wonder what happened to the party guests who are shown sitting between the brothers in the first double-page spread and who disappear until one of the last pages. This has some humor and more than a bit of a barb, but it sags a bit because of the fact that it's one gag with variations, relieved only by the onset of fraternal affection at the very end.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. *The Power of Light*; illus. by Irene Lieblich. Farrar, 1980. 80-20263. ISBN 0-374-36099-5. 87p. \$10.95.

R
4-6 Ingenuously awkward in composition, paintings in dark, bright colors illustrate the eight stories by a master-storyteller, one story for each night of the holiday. The binding theme, as the title indicates, is the light; even in the story of two blind children who love each other, it is by sitting near the warmth and comfort of the Hanukkah lamp that they find peace. Some of the stories are set in the time of World War II, some in the Warsaw ghetto, one in Brooklyn; the stories vary from realism to incorporation of the miraculous (the appearance of Elijah) but are united in their strong piety as they are in the polished craftsmanship and warmth with which they are written.

Slaaten, Evelyn. *The Good, the Bad, and the Rest of Us*. Morrow, 1980. 80-15595. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-22251-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-32251-4. 157p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.63.

Ad
3-5 Katie Donovan is ten, a lively and imaginative child who tells the story—episodic and lightly amusing—of some of her ploys, problems, and peccadilloes. The story is set in the Depression Era, and parts of it reflect that fact: Katie's father loses his job, for example, and she "borrows" thirty cents from her brother's locked box because she has no other

way to get to the movies. There's a bit of contrivance in the fact that Katie's father donates blood to help the injured son of his former employer and then gets his job back, and there's a bit of cuteness in the dialogue here and there, but this is an adequate period story.

Smith, Doris Buchanan. *Salted Lemons*. Four Winds, 1980. 80-66250. ISBN 0-590-07666-3. 233p. \$9.95.

R
4-6 In a story set in Atlanta during World War II, ten-year-old Darby is the outsider, the newcomer. Having come from Washington, D.C. she's a Yankee, and the children in her neighborhood are slow to accept her, save for Yoko, who—although Atlanta-born—is an outsider in another way and whose family is, during the course of the story, sent to an internment camp. One of the few people who is kind to Yoko is the German storekeeper, Mr. Kaigler, himself the victim of suspicion and persecution. The sensitive treatment of ethical problems and human relationships is balanced by the continuing thread of plot about adaptability; for example, Darby braves a meeting with a reputed ghost on Halloween night just to show the other children that she's not afraid, that she can be accepted. The structure of the book is diffuse, but the characters are strong, the issues are naturally incorporated and are sympathetically handled, and the characterization and writing style have depth and polish.

Springstubb, Tricia. *My Minnie Is a Jewel*; illus. by Jim Lamarche. Carolrhoda Books, 1980. 80-66792. ISBN 0-87614-131-9. 48p. \$5.95.

M
K-2 Although poor, Henry and Minnie are perfectly content because they have each other. Henry is particularly indulgent with his jewel when she ruins whatever she's cooking because she's stopped to watch the birds outside her window. One day a mother and her quarreling daughters, each of whom wants to wear the family jewels at a ball, stop to rest. The mother is so wearied by her girls' bickering that she announces she will give the jewels to Minnie if Henry, when he comes home, eats the horrible cake his wife has baked. He does (with the usual encomium) and Minnie gets the jewels. The three visitors ride off; Minnie hangs the jewels in the window to catch the sun. A bit didactic, mildly humorous, but not well put together: the incident of the visitors and the jewelry seems foisted on the insubstantial story that is more a situation than a development of a narrative.

Stadler, John. *Animal Cafe*; written and illus. by John Stadler. Bradbury, 1980. 80-15072. ISBN 0-87888-166-2. 26p. \$8.95.

Ad
K-2 Maxwell, owner of a food shop, is baffled by the fact that on one morning each week the shelves are depleted and the cash register overflowing. He chides his cat and dog, as he goes off on Friday night, because all they do is sleep. As soon as he's out of sight, the two animals spring into frantic action, hastily preparing food for the many animals who come to taste the delights of the Animal Café (they've put up a sign) and stuff themselves with a "Combustible Casserole." Just as frantically they clean up as dawn breaks—and when Maxwell comes in there it is again, a tidy shop with depleted shelves and overflowing cash register. And two exhausted beasts. "Silly animals," Maxwell says, "All you ever do is sleep." The story is a bit labored, although it has some moments of humor; the flatness is in the plot rather than the style, which is quite brisk and direct. The illustrations are nicely composed, restrained in the use of color, soft wash and line with comic details.

Stone, Nancy Y. *Dune Shadow*. Houghton, 1980. 80-18798. ISBN 0-395-29744-3. 180p. \$7.95.

Set in the 1850's in a small village in Michigan, this is a reflection of the fate that has

Ad 4-6 befallen so many towns on the shores of Lake Michigan, extinction because of the inexorable shifting of the sand dunes. Here the protagonist is thirteen-year-old Serena, who has been left in the care of her grandmother while her parents are preparing a home in another place where her father has a new job. Granny, who has moments of lucidity that pierce her senility, refuses to leave even when she learns that all other residents are going. One child is accidentally left behind, and she and Serena cope as best they can, moving into the bank, foraging for food in the empty stores and houses of the town. Eventually Granny is convinced that they must escape, and the three set out on their trudge to the next town, the girls pulling Granny on a sled. An author's note explains how the stripping of the land by the logging industry led to the erosion that culminated in the shifting sand that covered whole villages. The book has an inherently dramatic situation, but the pace is slow and the story seems overextended; adequately written, the narrative seems at times contrived to fit the situation rather than having its own strength.

Stravinsky, Igor. *Petrouchka*; by Igor Stravinsky and Alexander Benois; ed. and illus. by Elizabeth Cleaver. Atheneum, 1980. 79-14436. ISBN 0-689-30704-7. 28p. \$12.95.

Ad K-3 Although the story of the ballet is stiffly retold, the illustrations, colorful monochrome collage, are handsome enough to compensate for the text. The puppet who is stuffed with straw but has a soul, Petrouchka, dances in vain to please the ballerina he loves and is killed by his rival. The pictures reflect the posed frieze of a stage production; the text is a bit overlaid with a listing of he danced, she danced, they danced, somebody else danced—all exciting in performance, but flat when translated into print.

Switzer, Ellen. *Our Urban Planet*; illus. with photographs by Michael John Switzer and Jeffrey Gilbert Switzer. Atheneum, 1980. 80-12225. ISBN 0-689-30788-8. 279p. \$12.95.

R 8-12 Although today's cities are struggling with enormous problems (financial crises, transportation inadequacies, crime, pollution, etc.) and the central cores are becoming desolate, cities still attract those from rural areas and are therefore widening on their perimeters. Switzer gives some historical background on the growth of cities and their role in accelerating civilization, explores the reasons that urban centers have attracted—and still attract—newcomers, and describes in detail those problems that are strangling city governments, giving special attention to individual cities as representatives of urban types (planned towns, commercial cities, museum cities, etc.) The photographs are varied and fully captioned, the writing style serious and casually deft.

Thompson, Susan L. *One More Thing, Dad*; illus. by Dora Leder. Whitman, 1980. 79-27887. ISBN 0-8075-6095-2. 29p. \$5.95.

R 3-5 yrs. Although this counting book has a sedate quality, it incorporates some attractive facets in the fictional framework in which it is set: there's a nonstereotypical father (he's making bread) who is amenable to his child's overtures (he quickly agrees to go outdoors with Caleb) and there is evidence of Caleb's confidence in his own ability, as he packs a lunch, and of the fact that his father shares that confidence. As he collects items of food or clothing, Caleb ticks them off, and this is repeated in a natural way as he again counts the things he's taking along. The illustrations are conventionally representational, pleasantly uncluttered, competent line and wash.

Waber, Bernard. *Dear Hildegard*; written and illus. by Bernard Waber. Houghton, 1980. 80-13262. ISBN 0-395-29745-1. 60p. \$4.95.

Ad 3-6 Hildegard is an owl and a columnist who gives advice to creatures with problems; each letter is followed by an inane and puerile letter in sunny style, a spoof that may be better appreciated by adults who read (with acceptance or with tongue in cheek) such cor-

respondence in their daily newspapers. This has humor, but it's rather obvious humor: the pig who complains because pigs are called dirty and then rhapsodizes about the joy of wallowing in mud, the giraffe who complains that friends call him or her snobbish, etc. There's some variation on the theme, but basically this is one gag, and therefore seems slight.

Wahl, Jan. *Button Eye's Orange*; illus. by Wendy Watson. Warne, 1980. 80-14429. ISBN 0-7232-6188-1. 42p. \$8.95.

NR
3-5
yrs.

The ingredients are here (a toy, a crippled child, a quest, a wish granted) but they never combine into a palatable dish, due in part to the flat blandness of the style and in part to the sometimes-abrupt inconsistencies in the story. Bonzer is a boy who has a leg that doesn't "walk right," and his mother (no father suggested) makes cloth animals as a livelihood. Button Eye is a toy that has one leg sewn on backwards and therefore has a special bond with Bonzer. Taken to a grocery store, Button Eye spies an orange, the one thing his boy wants; then there is a procession of losing/finding-the-orange events, including animals, vegetables, and an old shoe dancing. Finally, the boy, walking (leg in a brace) with his mother, finds both the toy and the orange, and he says "Look what he brought for me," and walks home. Intended, the jacket flap states, as a poetic interpretation of love, this emerges only as a muddled fantasy; it has none of the poignancy that is inherent in the ingredients, and it is marred by such unexplained developments as "The orange got knocked off the stall and rolled under it. Now it was wrapped in green paper." The illustrations are paintings in soft colors, some cleanly composed, some crowded with details.

Wallace, Barbara Brooks. *Peppermints in the Parlor*. Atheneum, 1980. 80-12326. ISBN 0-689-30790-X. 198p. \$8.95.

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4-6

Newly orphaned, eleven-year-old Emily goes to San Francisco to stay in the mansion she'd visited before, the home of her Aunt and Uncle Twice. Alas, Uncle Twice has disappeared, and once-lively Aunt Twice has become a faded drudge working for the two elderly sisters, plump Mrs. Plumly and tall, thin Mrs. Meeching, who has "the meanest, wickedest, evillest pair of eyes" Emily had ever seen. Meeching has turned the house into a home for old people, a stark setting for cruelty and deprivation. There are peppermints in the parlor, but anybody who takes one is punished. A friendly delivery boy helps Emily through a series of obstacles and dangers until Uncle Twice reappears, the two sisters are exposed, Emily regains her inherited fortune, and the mansion is returned to its rightful owners, who keep the old people but make life comfortable and pleasant for them. There is plenty of action, but the characters are stereotypical and the Victorian melodrama of the plot seems forced and predictable.

Williams, Barbara. *A Valentine for Cousin Archie*; illus. by Kay Chora. Dutton, 1980. 80-181. ISBN 0-525-41930-6. 29p. \$8.95.

Ad
K-2

Pink, white, and brown, the softly drawn pictures of animals are just a bit sweet; breezy and cozy, the text is just a bit contrived. However, the triple appeals of animals, valentines, and mishaps should appeal to the read-aloud audience. Chester Chipmunk visits Cousin Archie, and when he leaves, Archie finds a sugary message. He decides it must have come from Widow Cottontail, and sends her a valentine; she assumes her valentine has come from Oswald Opossum and sends him one, and so on. Nothing really comes of this chain of misinterpretations, since each recipient-sender is pleased. The story ends with Chester bringing Archie a hot water bottle for his lumbago and seeing the original valentine on the wall. It proves to be the torn-off half of a shopping list.

Winter, Paula, illus. *Sir Andrew*. Crown, 1980. 80-14069. ISBN 0-517-53911-X. 30p. \$7.95.

Ad K-3 Sir Andrew, in this wordless picture book, is a handsome donkey who finds himself totally charming. Polished, combed, impeccably dressed, deodorant-sprayed, he sallies forth. Admiring his reflection in a store window, he fails to see a trapdoor in the sidewalk (the drawing shows the door and the donkey in improbable positions after the fall) and lands in a basement. Hospitalized and discharged, our hero limps along the street, chases his hat when it blows off, and causes drivers to despair; still chasing his hat, Sir Andrew knocks a pig off a stepladder. Paying no heed to the havoc in his wake, he is again smiling at his reflection when, in the last picture, he is about to step on a banana peel. This has a lot of disaster humor, so it should appeal to children; it succeeds in making the action clear, which is the first requisite of a wordless book; the pictures have humor and elegance of line in drawings washed by cool, soft shades of blue, buff, and beige. What this doesn't have is structure or story line.

Worth, Valerie. *Curlicues; The Fortunes of Two Pug Dogs*; illus. by Natalie Babbitt. Farrar, 1980. 80-15594. ISBN 0-374-31664-3. 51p. \$7.95.

R 4-6 Both the text and the prim, tidy drawings of this period piece have a nostalgic appeal; Worth captures (and Babbitt reflects) the stratification and the sentimentality of the Victorian era. Two gentlewomen who, unbeknownst to each other, buy pug dogs from the same pet shop, are very much in contrast: thin, grim Miss Thorne never pets her dog, scolds the housekeeper, Mrs. Hart, for feeding it anything but scraps, and wants it to be only a well-behaved watchdog. Plump, kindly Mrs. Downey dotes on her dog, and makes so much fuss over him that the surly cook becomes irritable. It may be pat, but it is most satisfying that, when Mrs. Hart is fired and takes the dog with her, she eventually gets taken on to replace Mrs. Downey's surly cook, and the two pug dogs live with mistress and servants in complete amity. A gentle, sweet story with no pretensions to be more than an engaging diversion.

Zimelman, Nathan. *Positively No Pets Allowed*; illus. by Pamela Johnson, Dutton, 1980. 80-377. ISBN 0-525-37560-0. 29p. \$7.95.

R K-3 When Seymour Goldberg tells his mother he wants a pet from Farber's pet store, Mr. Farber says, "A look wouldn't hurt." "With Seymour," his loving mother explains, "a look always hurts." Nevertheless, she agrees to buy a gorilla, although the rule of the building in which they live is "no pets." After a rather eventful walk home, they met Mr. O'Brien, the owner of the building; O'Brien is myopic and refers to the gorilla as the Goldbergs' visitor; because the visitor has obligingly carried in a very large piece of ice, the landlord hopes he'll stay forever. So does Seymour. Arrant nonsense combines piquantly with a bland style; the dialogue has flavor, and the story is fresh and funny, with soft black and white illustrations that verge on the grotesque but don't quite get there.

Zizmor, Jonathan. *Doctor Zizmor's Guide to Clearer Skin*; by Jonathan Zizmor and Diane English. Lippincott, 1980. 79-3014. Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-31877-4; Library ed. ISBN 0-397-31876-6. 183p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.89.

R 6-12 Ho-hum, another relax-and-bear-it book? Not at all. This is an eminently sensible book that doesn't talk down to adolescent readers, doesn't overload them with jargon or extraneous facts, and doesn't try to use teenage speech patterns to show readers how the authors identify with them. It is specific about what causes acne, what you can do and what you can't do about it, what you should eat, how you should care for your skin. "Informed self-treatment" is the term used on the jacket, and this can provide informa-

tion about that: what medication and cosmetics to use and what ingredients to avoid, how to wash, what to do about strong summer sunshine, and when to consult a dermatologist. The authors give explicit advice to readers with different kinds, or colors, of skin and they are equally explicit about therapeutic or cosmetic products, using actual brand names. A relative index gives access to a text that is organized and written with care and clarity.

Zolotow, Charlotte (Shapiro). *Say It!* illus. by James Stevenson. Greenwillow, 1980. 79-25115. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-80276-1; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-84276-3. 21p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.63.

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4-6
yrs. A little girl and her mother are walking on a windy, sunny autumn day. "Say it!" the girl demands imperiously, and her mother makes a comment each time on the beauty of the day or some aspect of what they are seeing. "Say it!" the child pleads again, "Say it say it say it," and her mother says, "I love you I love you I love you." "That's what I wanted you to say." Mother laughs, "That's what I've been saying all the time." A graceful, fragile understatement, quiet but joyful, the book has pictures that are more poetic than most of Stevenson's work, the pastel paintings filled with light, movement, and swirling autumn leaves.

READING FOR TEACHERS

To order any of the items below, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.

Butler, Twiss. "Adopting Textbooks in Texas: Facts and Fancies." *Interracial Books for Children Bulletin*, Volume 11, Number 11, 1980.

Cianciolo, Patricia, and others. "Reflections." *Language Arts*, April, 1980.

Clarkson, Atelia and Cross, Gilbert. *World Folktales: A Scribner Resource Collection*. Scribner, 1980. 450p. \$20.00.

Hickman, Janet. "Children's Response to Literature: What Happens to the Classroom." *Language Arts*, May, 1980.

Hoover, H.M. "SF—Out of This World." *Language Arts*, April, 1980.

Leonard, Charlotte. *Tied Together: Topics and Thoughts for Introducing Children's Books*. Scarecrow, 1980. 253p. \$13.00.

Meltzer, Milton. "The Possibilities of Nonfiction: A Writer's View." *Children's Literature in Education*, Autumn, 1980.

Siegel, Elizabeth. "Up for Discussion: Short-Changed; Short Stories for Children." *School Library Journal*, May, 1980.

AWARDS

Newbery Award: *Jacob Have I Loved*, by Katherine Paterson (Crowell).

Honor Books: *The Fledgling*, by Jane Langton (Harper & Row) and *A Ring of Endless Light*, by Madeleine L'Engle (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

Caldecott Award: *Fables*, written and illus. by Arnold Lobel (Harper & Row).

Honor Books: *The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher*, written and illus. by Molly Bang (Four Winds); *Truck*, illus. by Donald Crews (Greenwillow); *Mice Twice*, written and illus. by Joseph Low (Atheneum) and *The Bremen-Town Musicians*, retold and illus. by Ilse Plume from the Grimm Brothers (Doubleday).

